

**Research Proposal Form**

The research proposal provides the School and potential research supervisors with a clear indication of the topic in which you are interested, gives an indication of your ability to identify and develop an interesting research question, and demonstrates your critical thinking and writing skills. Potential supervisors will consider research proposals as preliminary indicators of your area of interest and will not necessarily assume that the proposal defines exactly the research that you may undertake. Please note that this form provides a general guide to writing a research proposal but does not guarantee acceptance to any of our PhD programmes.

Word Length: your proposal should be between 2,000 and 3,000 words.

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| **Title**  Provide a clear and indicative title for your proposed research: it is essential that your title is concise and contains some key words that indicate your area of study |
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| **Summary of the proposed project (around 250 words)**  Provide a short summary of the project that indicates the objectives, the methods and contribution of the project |
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| **Background and rationale (around 1,000 words)**  In this section we are looking for your awareness of the current evidence / literature and your ability to identify where the knowledge gaps are and how this fits with your proposed study.  You also should say something about your motivation for studying for a higher degree and why the proposed study / topic is of interest to you, including an indication of how it grows out of your personal and / or professional development.  There needs to be a clear statement on what your proposed study is setting out to achieve. What are the objectives? What is the research question? What is the overall aim of this study? |
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| **Methodological approach to your study (around 1,500 words)**  Applicants for **PhD/MScR in Clinical Psychology, PhD in Health in Social Science, and PhD in Nursing Studies** please use the this guidance:  This section sets out your research plan and the methods you will use to answer your research question/s. If you are planning empirical work, this is likely to include your design, sample, setting, procedures and analytic approach. It should have some information on whether you are intending to use a theoretical framework and if so, which one. Will you be using existing theory or developing theory?  You should identify any challenges, and discuss ethical considerations you might face and how will you address these. If an aspect of your proposal is particularly high risk (e.g., accessing a specialist population), it would be helpful to show how you will manage this.  Please give an indicative timetable for your proposed study. Give an overview of the main stages of your proposed study and time needed for the different research stages. Link these stages to the degree you are applying for (e.g. PhD – first year – literature review, writing a research protocol and gaining access and ethical approval).  Applicants for **PhD in Counselling Studies** please use this guidance:  In this section describe your thinking about how you will conduct the research, including giving consideration of ethical issues. Please identify the methodological and / or ethical challenges you anticipate: you do not need to resolve them at this stage. |
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| **Statement of contribution to research and practice (250 words recommended).**  This section should summarise the potential impact of the proposed research. Although no indication of the research findings can be presented, it is beneficial to demonstrate how you envisage your research to contribute to debates and discussions within the area, make a contribution to the existing work and extend understanding. |
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| **References**  Finally, you should provide references for the research proposal. References should be evident throughout your proposal and they should be presented using an appropriate academic style (e.g. Harvard). |
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